

PATENT
IBM Docket No. RAL920000090US1

Amendments to the Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) A method comprising ~~the steps of~~:
 - (a) providing a database of rules;
 - (b) applying an algorithm to the database to identify Almost-Exact Rules and Other Rules;
 - (c) partitioning the database so that the Almost-Exact Rules are grouped into one or more groups;
 - (d) partitioning the database so that the Other Rules are grouped in at least one separate group.
2. (Currently Amended) The method of Claim 1 further including ~~the step of~~ using [[FM]] a Full Match search algorithm to test packets of data received from a network against ~~with~~ the Almost-Exact rules in the one or more groups.
3. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1 further including ~~the step of~~ using [[an SMT]] a Software Managed Tree algorithm to test packets with of data received from a network against the Other rules in the separate group.
4. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1 further including ~~the step of~~ using a Content-Addressable Memory (CAM) to test packets with against the other rules in the separate group.
5. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1 wherein the database of rules is being partitioned as a function of sub-fields within each rules.

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6-25. (Canceled)

26. (New) The method of claim 1 wherein each one of the Almost-Exact Rules includes a range of values on only one sub-field.

27. (New) The method of claim 1 wherein each one of the Almost-Exact Rules includes a wild card in only one component.